

TRANSLOG



Winter 2005

SDDC mourns loss of Command Affairs Director

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**The
Distribution Magazine
of the U.S. Army**

Winter 2005

Brig. Gen. Charles W. Fletcher, Jr.
Commander
Military Surface Deployment and
Distribution Command

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C o n t e n t s

On the cover ...

We dedicate this issue of Translog to Mr. John R. Randt who passed away Dec. 14, 2004. This photo was taken of Randt while on assignment covering SDDC port operations at the Port of Beaumont, Texas in 2003.

(Photo by Don Dees)



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(Photo by Jim Pleasants)

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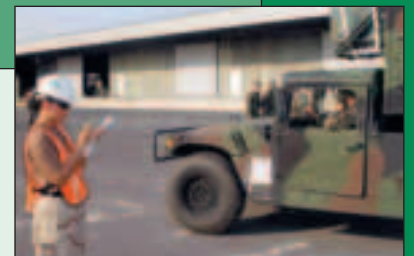
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SDDC JOY:

Capt. Julia Bell, 599th Transportation Group plans officer, tallies the off-load of Marine equipment at the Port of Chuk Samet, Thailand. Bell is SDDC's 2004 Junior Officer of the Year.



(Photo by Robyn Mack)

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Commander looks to future at AUSA winter symposium

By Patti Bielling, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Operations Center

Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command commander Brig. Gen.

Charles Fletcher spoke Feb. 17 at the Association of the United States Army's Winter Symposium in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

The panel discussion, "Equipping and Supporting an Expeditionary Army," reached an audience of active-duty military, Department of Defense civilians, industry professionals and retired service members and other advocates for the military.

Chairing the discussion was Lt. Gen. Richard A. Hack, Deputy Commanding General of United States Army Material Command.

Other members included Maj. Gen. William E. Mortensen, Director of Logistics, J-4, United States Central Command; Brig. Gen. Jerome Johnson, Commanding General, United States Army Field Support Command; and John Stoddart, President, Defense Business, Oshkosh Truck Corporation.

The SDDC commander spoke to TRANSLOG after taking part in the panel discussion.

Q: What did you want to accomplish by speaking here?

A: This was a great opportunity. I think our message was to three different audiences.

One, to the active-duty people here, to say, we are really different than we were several years ago, that we no longer stop at the port. We're going forward, we're providing services to the betterment of the joint force, particularly the Army. So I wanted them to know that we're making deployment

*Brig. Gen. Charles W. Fletcher, Jr.
Commander, SDDC*



easier, that we're going to be at the installation and at the port, being the deployment experts for the deploying units, and providing visibility of cargo along the way.

Second, there were so many retired Army leaders here who are also influential on the industry side and with current Army leaders. To them, we're saying that we're no longer (Military Traffic Management Command), the "old householdgoods guys." For one thing, we're not constrained by the old ways of standard military documentation that has gotten more archaic over time. By educating retired military leaders about our new initiatives, they will understand our processes and our needs. They'll know that we do more than just move household goods. We are in the theater, all the way forward and are providing big bang for the buck.

Our industry partners, our third audience here, have gotten so much better

in the way that they're doing things. If we had benchmarked ourselves seven years ago in in-transit visibility, we would have been one of the best in the world, particularly for a surface movement company. Now, if you look around, most of our ocean-carrier partners have a logistics services element under their corporate umbrella, and they sell end-to-end in-transit visibility. Now we want to say to industry, "You've got all this visibility from supplier to port, or port to consumer, what's it going to take for us to share your data?"

We may decide to manage this data ourselves or have a shipping company or a third-party provider do all this, but we'll get much better visibility and enrich the information environment in which we work.

Q: What about visibility of unit cargo moves that normally travel on

military vessels?

A: We want to get our partners into moving unit equipment, too. Right now, the requirements side and the places they go don't lend them to solution sets that meet our needs. But part of that is why we want to get commercial ocean carriers into the retrograde business. If they get regular service to Kuwait to bring back retrograde equipment, then the next logical step is to start redeploying units on these ships, and then deploying units. We'd have some peaks and valleys, but we'll be able to get loads going both ways.

Q: Does industry have the roll-on/roll-off capacity we require to move unit cargo?

A: American Roll-On/Roll-Off Carrier, for example, just put several vessels in their American-flag fleet that they are using in service from the East Coast to Kuwait. These are not only roll-on, roll-off, they're actually heavier duty, with stronger decks, than some of our own ships. So there are a lot of opportunities.

Q: Are you looking to industry for other capabilities?

A: Besides the data-sharing initiative, we are looking how industry conducts its end-gate process. That is, when commercial cargo arrives at a port, how does the ocean carrier know that the cargo has arrived? They use optical character readers that look at three pieces of information on the truck and chassis, and the carrier immediately knows what the load is and sends it through.

Q: You mentioned some technology challenges. What are some of SDDC's successes that you want to build on?

A: Just the magnitude of this operation (Iraqi Freedom and Enduring

Freedom) from a transportation point of view. The amount of stuff that we deploy over and redeploy back just boggles the mind. We have units that are doing things at an operations tempo that we haven't seen before. We never got to this level of cargo movement in Desert Storm ...so we never really got into our major (sustainment) effort. We're in a high effort now all the time. In that sense, that's a great news story.

The challenge comes because although we're moving a lot of things, we don't always know what we're moving. That's not just an Army problem. You can go to Wal-Mart or to anybody, and there's a whole bunch of stuff in the back that's frustrated cargo. We have not put the emphasis on knowing what's there, and now we're starting to do that.

And that really gets to the issue. Our future is information dominance within this field. We will have other people doing the physical work, but we need to be the world's experts in information. And that's where industry we can look to industry.

For example, Wal-Mart is pushing passive radio-frequency identification—using the new, 40-cent, paper-thin tags on individual items. They will develop a technology that, because of the size of their operation, likely will become an industry standard. We'll be able to leverage that.

Q: What will you take back with you from this symposium?

A: I had an opportunity to talk over a long laundry list of issues with General Mortensen.

In looking at the displays, there's a lot of interesting information about the technology and how they are integrating it in the tactical operations centers, which gives us a real insight into what we (as logisticians) need to provide to give more value to their operational

picture.

I think we can do a lot. We're looking at the Battle Command Sustainment Support System, or BCS3, which is the logistics piece of a constellation of Army battlefield command systems. The systems provide a common-operating picture of the theater or even the world.


Q: What capability will that give logisticians and the Department of Defense as a whole?

A: Development of BCS3 started as a logistics status report on vehicles that are available, and it is now progressed into a much larger capability. You'll not only be able to see the supply trucks moving, but you'll also know what's on them.

But in order to see what's moving on the trucks, you'll have to see all the supplies in the pipeline. So this picture has gotten bigger and bigger. Eventually, you'll be able to look at all the stuff moving—the Defense Logistics Agency cargo, Army Materiel Command cargo, (SDDC) containers. Eventually, the logistician will be able to influence the system, finding and prioritizing cargo for shipment and otherwise managing the movement of supplies.

Q: And this is seeing limited use today?

A: Yes, we have it in our Ops Center, DLA and Army Materiel Command has it. So now you can begin using that picture that you developed at the tip of the spear and now you're expanding back and all the players are beginning to look at this.

Even though the technology is there today, our process is not quite mature yet. We've bought a race car, and everybody's looking at it saying, 'ooooh,' but now we've got to figure out how to drive it. 

WARRIOR'S CORNER

By SDDC Command Sgt. Maj. Tomás R. Hawkins

Surface Warriors,
As always, I take pleasure in every opportunity that I can to address the members, families, and friends of our great team. As we close the chapter of the thrills and chills of 2004, we are glad to arrive in 2005. I welcome you to the first quarter of the New Year and hope you are excited as I am in taking on the challenges that lie on "The Road Ahead."

In echoing comments made by the Senior Army leadership, we need to embrace change, continue to look at how we can become better, and continue to be proud of our fighting forces, their families and all involved in the efforts—not only in places of conflict, but also in places of relief. I will continue to be the head cheerleader reminding everyone that there are no "Big I's" or "Little You's" in what we

do. There are no little jobs in our business. From the Hoover Operating Technician to the Command Sergeant Major, we all have responsibilities that make us the success story we were, are and will continue to be.

I solicit your support in making our logo and motto known—"Surface Warriors – Let's Roll!" It tells who we are and what we do. I have provided you a copy of the Soldier's Creed, which regardless if you wear a uniform or not, you are a soldier of the SDDC mindset. It also contains the "Warrior Ethos" and description of how the motto came about. I ask that you display it in your respective work areas as a reminder in instilling esprit de corps.

I stand proud and salute you as we move into the new year. As we work through the bumps in the road and the



stumbling blocks that arise, I believe the small steps we take forward will make us successful by leaps and bounds. Again, I applaud your efforts and I'm privileged to be part of the "One-Two Combination" of a "Knock Out" organization.

Until next time ...

"Let's – Roll!"



In our efforts to instill this spirit of Warrior Ethos throughout the command, we have adopted the cry of "Surface Warriors – Let's Roll." The cry of "Surface Warriors" is in exemplifying our position as the "Spearhead of Logistics." We lead the way in providing capability and sustainment to the War Fighters over the surface (rail, highway, and ocean) by Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and a civilian work force that understands the meaning of Warrior Ethos and demonstrates the Warrior Spirit possessed by all who support and defend our country.

"Let's Roll" were the last words of Todd Beamer as heard by his wife on the cell phone call prior to storming the flight cabin in an attempt to wrest control of the plane from the hijackers on 9/11. That plane crashed shortly thereafter in Pennsylvania, killing all aboard. Todd Beamer was recognized, along with others, as true heroes. The slogan is

simple, yet has a symbolic meaning for Transporters as well as others in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as it connects us from that fateful day—and all Americans—to the war we're fighting today. It hopefully serves to motivate the Soldiers to action as one team when they step out to answer the Nation's call.


Our logo is made up of a Soldier, a warrior, the most important and precious resource possessing the combat and technical skills to move the Forces, and the means in which we provide deployment and distribution ... by rail, by highway and by sea.

Together, when we get set out to do our part in a world wide mission supporting the War Fighter and their families, we will be "Surface Warriors" in our efforts and shout out "Let's Roll" as we move into action.

It is in this spirit that we, the members of SDDC adopt the following greeting and reply:

"Surface Warriors – Let's Roll"





The Warrior Ethos compels Soldiers to fight through all conditions to victory, no matter how long it takes and no matter how much effort is required. It is the Soldier's selfless commitment to the Nation, mission, unit and fellow Soldiers. It is the professional attitude that inspires every American Soldier. The Warrior Ethos is grounded in refusal to accept failure. It is developed and sustained through discipline, example, commitment to Army values, and pride in the Army's heritage.

It was in this spirit that we live and serve by "The Soldier's Creed":

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills.

I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am a member of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

I am a Surface Warrior.

SDDC mourns loss of Command Affairs Director

Diana Dawa, Translog Editor
SDDC Headquarters



John R. Randt
(Photo by LaWanda York)

Members of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command were saddened by the death of the Command Affairs director, John R. Randt on Dec. 14, 2004.

He was 59.

Randt was born in Alexandria and raised in Euclid, Ohio. He attended Miami University of Ohio and graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1967 with a bachelor's degree in journalism. In 1990, he received a master's degree in public administration from Ball State University, Muncie, Ind.

Randt's military schooling included the Army Management Staff College, where he was named the Army's distinguished graduate for Class 95-3. He served as a television news director in Wilmington, N.C., from 1976 to 1983, and also worked as a reporter for the Wilmington Star-News and the Cleveland Press. He moved to the Washington area in 1993 to work at the

Pentagon and joined the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command the next year, handling public affairs for the agency.

Randt served in the Army, the Army Reserve and the National Guard, and retired from the Guard as a lieutenant colonel. From 1969 to 1970 he served as a platoon leader in Vietnam. He served in Guatemala, Panama and Italy, and was assigned to Operation Provide Comfort and Operation Desert Storm, during which he helped train U.S. task forces in Hungary for service in Iraq.

To some in the command, John Randt was the guy who took pictures, conducted interviews and wrote down information at SDDC events. To many, Randt was the "voice" of the command, making all aware of his presence, which was marked by his boisterous style of presenting numerous Command Briefs to visitors and newcomers to SDDC.

Randt was my supervisor, mentor, confidant and friend. I will never forget the day I met John—it was at the Transportation Conference held in Washington, D.C. in May of 2003.

Here was this big guy with two cameras wrapped around his neck and making all these big arm movements when he talked to me. I do remember we had a conversation, but he did most of the talking and it was big and loud, but not in a bad way. Randt was boisterous, gregarious, unassuming and charming—all at the same time.

SDDC's recently retired Deputy to the Commander, Mr. William Lucas, had been with SDDC for 28 years. He said no one ever raised the bar on reporting and publications as high as Randt did. "I can't begin to tell you how many folks inside and outside the organization complemented John on his style

and products," said Lucas.

"When I think of John Randt, a number of descriptors jump to mind: Aggressive (in a pleasant sense) in his digging for stories and outlets and opportunities to present the members of SDDC and our partners in the best light to the broadest audience," said Lucas, adding, "John had an unbridled enthusiasm even when his burdens were heavy—he was compassionate to all those who he came in contact with and a great friend to all."

"John was an outstanding storyteller who could turn even the mundane into an exciting piece," said Lucas.

Randt had a way of bringing you into a conversation like you two were sharing some kind of enormous secret, and the joke was always on someone else. He loved jokes, he loved to laugh and he loved his work.

"John lived and breathed SDDC," said June Pagan, a former SDDC Operations

A classic John Randt pose.
(Photo by Diana Dawa)



Center public affairs officer, currently an administrative officer. "His primary goal always was to ensure that our vital mission was spotlighted," said Pagan. "He had an infectious energy that inspired all he did."

Mike Bellafaire, SDDC command historian said the John Randt he remembers (and will remember) never lacked for energy—he was always upbeat.

"He always brought his enthusiasm and energy to a project," said Bellafaire. "One of his favorite expressions was 'In the fight!'—meaning he was willing and ready to take on all manner of challenges—he proved that to us."

"John was an inspiration, he was always cheerful and supportive," said Ana Colon, director of SDDC Equal Employment Opportunity. "He treated others with dignity and much respect."

Randt had a booming voice, which went well with his gregarious personality. You always knew when he was in the hallway at SDDC headquarters, in a room, or at the port. It was apparent he really enjoyed his vocation. Randt especially enjoyed the writing aspect of his job.

"John was very fond of the written word, which is consistent with the love he showed for his work," said Lt. Col. Louis Plevell, inspector general, SDDC. "He once told me, it was a shame that in his opinion, people no longer wrote with elegance as they did when our country was first founded," said Plevell, adding, "I have included a passage that makes me think of John. It's from another great and elegant writer with an adventurous spirit and love of life, Jack London:

"Who will reap what I have sown here in this almighty sweet land? You and I will be forgotten. Others will come and go; these, too, shall pass, as you and I shall pass, and others take their places, each telling his love, as I tell you, that life is sweet."

You could tell he really loved his work said Virginia King, director,

SDDC G1/4 (personnel and logistics). "He was one of the most positive and upbeat people in SDDC, always proud to tell the command's story, always having a kind word when ever he saw you."

"I will always remember the way he presented Command Affairs information at staff call," said King. "In a loud enthusiastic voice, he would always begin with, 'Command Affairs reports!' followed by a colorful presentation of information," she recalled.

His concern, professionalism and loyalty to the "SDDC Story" was immeasurable, said Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Hawkins, SDDC's top enlisted Soldier. "In one of the last conversations we had, while fighting through some tears, he shared how much he loved what he's done, how much he didn't want to leave, and thanked me for being selected to serve with the best command he's been associated with," said Hawkins. "I'll miss him."

Cathy Cherney, SDDC G1's lead human resource specialist, said she will always remember John as big—big physically, big voice and an incredibly big heart. "My favorite memory of him is whenever he would see me in the hall or in his office he would stand, salute smartly and proclaim, 'I am in the presence of greatness!'"

He had this great way of making me feel important," said Cherney. "These past few weeks I have come to realize that it wasn't John who was in the presence of greatness—it was certainly the rest of us."

At John's remembrance ceremony, held Dec. 17, 2004 at the Faith Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Va., it was evident that he was well regarded and genuinely cared about. Friends, family members, and John's peers and neighbors stood up to recount the many wonderful memories they had of John. It truly was a celebration of his life.

One of John's proudest works is the command's magazine, Translog. When I prepared each issue of Translog for printing, John would always provide me his support and assistance and gave the



John Randt doing one of the many things associated with public affairs work—what he loved doing best—inter-viewing people about their mission for SDDC.

(Photo by Bram de Jong)

rough draft a "once-over" before the package was mailed out to the printers in York, Pa. Each time, John would remark how well done it looked, along with, "this is something to be proud of."

His kind remarks will always stay with me. I miss him greatly.

Once in a while, John would provide interesting quotes from one of his favorite books, "Away All Boats," by Kenneth Dodson. In remembering John, I recall one of those Dodson quotes he used in an article he wrote for the Translog, which I thought a fitting tribute as his spirit continues on its journey, yet in another form:

"... This new ship – flag bedecked, after appropriate speeches by dignitaries and traditional champagne treatment – slid down greased ways to meet salt water; proud name on her cruiser stern ..."

John Randt is survived by his wife of 10 years, Vicki-Kadilak Randt of Alexandria; three children from his first marriage, Scott Randt of Indianapolis and Marcus Randt and Shannon Randt Rothrock, both of Raleigh, N.C.; his mother, Betty Randt of Euclid; and a granddaughter. 🕊

In Celebration of John Randt

By Bill Millar, President
American Public Transportation Association



John Randt was my best friend. He was the big brother I never had. He was strong physically, tough mentally, honest, loyal and steadfast. A great companion, kind to all he met, calm and comfortable. John lived many lives and lived them well. He was a journalist, a soldier, a father, a husband, a traveler, a keen observer and interested participant in all that the world had to offer. He was interesting; he was good company.

John and I go back a long way—in fact, it started before either of us was born. My Dad met his Dad when they were six and seven years old in Lakewood, Ohio. That began a friendship that lasted their entire lives and set a pattern that John and I fell happily into—best friends forever, no matter what.

To understand John, one needs to look where we started. When we were little it was family and neighborhood. We grew up in a 1950's perfect suburban world. There actually were people straight out of "Leave it to Beaver" and "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet" in our lives. Our friends had names like Jeff, Mark, Ted and Ray. We walked to our elementary school Monday through Friday and to our church on Sunday. Order, civility, security, pleasant predictability.

Growing up on a small street among family and friends: that is where we started.

East 252nd Street is a short cul de sac nestled up against Lake Erie, in Euclid, Ohio. As kids, we wanted for nothing. Our Dads had steady jobs, our Moms were at home, and there was plenty to do right our doors: baseball in the circle or at Chase Brass field behind John's house, football in ravine, and swimming in the lake or the pool jointly owned by five families. Then there was the beach—source of endless fascination and involvement—canoes and other small boats, and the many rafts we built out of driftwood, which we imagined, to be the Kon Tiki.

"Mom, we are going for a walk on the beach," was the phrase that started many adventures. What would we find today? Another float from a fisherman's net, a message in a bottle. More golf balls, tennis, balls, soft balls, parts of boats, or just useless flotsam and jetsam? And what's going on at sewer No. 1? (Which my Dad called "lovers' lane). Look out at the horizon! Where is that ship going? Looks like a Dutch flag—maybe Rotterdam? Look at that sailboat! Must be coming back from Put-In-Bay!

Ah, Put-In-Bay! Great escape in the middle of the lake: Family outings, Perry's monument, sailboat racing, bicycle exploring, Round House dreaming, sunset watching; heaven on earth at any age. Day trips on the ferry boat, overnight on Ray Ozmun's trusty "LaSalle" or in the recent years, a week at Sanders' cottages, John's five-star resort. Family, fun and friends!

John had a natural curiosity that was never quenched. He was an avid reader—and boy, was he a reader! He devoured newspapers, historic tomes, biographies, military histories—you name it. He is probably the only person I knew who read all 1500 pages of

"The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," let alone several times through.

And, reading about it was not enough. John wanted to experience it. You haven't lived until you've camped out in the American Military Cemetery above Omaha Beach in France, without a tent on a rainy night with John Randt.

Well-traveled, John always took the road less worn, always had his camera ready and always found the right person to talk with to understand the meaning behind the incident or situation he was viewing. And the people wanted to talk to John! He had an honest and straightforward way about his questions that put people at ease. To paraphrase one of John's Army colleagues: "It didn't matter whether John was talking to the lowest clerk or a newly minted three star, he dealt with each with respect and took the time to make sure each understood the points he was trying to make.

John was one of those people who could make you better at doing something than you ever thought you could be. He did it by raising the bar of performance for himself and inviting you to come along. His high school and college competitive swimming career would be a good example. But if you didn't, or couldn't, that was okay, too.

John liked to keep busy by accomplishing needed tasks. It was one of the rules of his life: "Get the work done first and the play time will be that much sweeter." In fact, John had many rules that guided his life.

Some that were particularly important to me included:

As long as you keep making decisions, you survive.

Proper rest is essential to the successful execution of the project.

Pull your own weight.

And one particularly important these past few months:

Stay active. Stay positive. Stay in the fight.

John Randt enjoyed life. Whether it was a weekend getaway with Miss Vicki at Rehoboth Beach or Harper's Ferry, a visit to Put-In-Bay with family and friends, a business trip to photograph Soldiers benefiting from the latest Roll on/Roll off technology, or helping me (perhaps more accurately, me helping him) with a project at our Kent Island vacation house, John attacked it all with a plan and the simple expectation of success. It's who he was and who he will always be to me.

So, whenever there is a good sailing breeze (a "favorable" as our Dad's used to call it), I will think of John. When I see a Border collie, it will remind me of him, too. The next time I encounter "Sailor's Choice" wine from Lonz's, (an exclusive Ohio boutique vineyard) or see a battlefield or any one of a thousand other reminders, I will think of John and the difference he has made in my life. And I hope you will, too.

Betty Randt – Thank you for brining John into this world. It's terribly unfair that you have to see him leave, but know that no one ever had a finer son than you and Bob.

Vicki – I wouldn't have come to know you but for John. We are sorry for your devastating loss, but no one could have done more to nurture and help him. You stuck by him even when he didn't want to become a "patient." Thank you for taking care of my friend.

Scott, Marcus, and Shannon – Honor your father in all you do. He believed in you and loved you so much and he always will.

Well, John, you're in heaven now with your Dad and my Dad. With Martine, and Doc and Marge. With your grandparents and so many others. I expect we will all join you there one day. And when we do, let's jump in my Dad's '56 Ford Country Squire one last time and to Put-In-Bay. Just for the memories.

So long my friend. I'm a better man because of you. May you rest in God's peace. 🕊️



William Lucas, previously SDDC's Deputy to the Commander, and Vicki Kadilak-Randt.

John Randt was recognized posthumously with several awards presented during a private ceremony held at SDDC headquarters in Alexandria, Va. on January 26, 2005.

William Lucas, then SDDC's deputy to the commander—now retired, presented the Commanders Award for Civilian Service, a plaque from the 598th Transportation Terminal Group and the "highly coveted" SDDC Command plaque to Randt's wife who accepted on her husband's behalf.

Mrs. Vicki Kadilak-Randt, wife, and Mrs. Eunice Randt, mother, as well as Randt's colleagues from SDDC Command Affairs attended.

From the left: Tru Pauling, SDDC Congressional liaison specialist shares memories of John Randt with his wife, Vicki Kadilak-Randt, and his mother, Eunice Randt during the award ceremony. Pictured with back turned is Diana Dawa, Translog editor.

(Photos by Mitch Chandran)





Sgt. 1st Class Sisi Fuluvaka, Headquarters, 599th Transportation Group, and Master Sgt. Larry Yeley, 595th Transportation Group (Provisional), Southwest Asia, go over the tally sheet for a recent vessel discharge.



A Marine from the 7th Communications Battalion, Okinawa, Japan, assists 599th Deployment and Distribution Support Team members by guiding a forklift down the ramp of a High Speed Vessel at the Port of Chuk Samet, Thailand.



Humvees were among the first military vehicles to enter Thailand in support of the tsunami relief efforts. The humvees were transported on a Westpac Express High Speed Vessel from Okinawa Japan. Westpac Express is based in Mobile, Ala.

Transportation Group members support Tsunami relief efforts

Story and photos by Robyn Mack, Public Affairs Specialist
599th Transportation Group

The global structure of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command was in full force as team members from the 599th Transportation Group and 595th Transportation Group (Provisional) joined together Jan. 4 to 20 in support of Operation Unified Assistance in the tsunami devastated areas of Thailand.

The team made up of servicemembers and civilians from Headquarters 599th, Hawaii; 595th (Provisional), Southwest Asia; and subordinate units from the 835th Transportation Battalion, Okinawa, Japan; 836th Transportation Battalion, Yokohama, Japan; and, 837th Transportation Battalion, Pusan, Korea, formed the 599th Deployment and Distribution Support Team, served as the U.S. Pacific Command's single port manager in the relief efforts.

According to Lt. Col. Drefus Lane,

599th DDST and 836th Trans. Bn. commander, the joining of forces is a true testament to the abilities of SDDC.

"Even though each of the members has a specific role they carry out at their home station, as they come together you see the true range of their skills and understanding for the SDDC mission," Lane said. "These guys are helping expand each others expertise, all while providing the best possible service to the customer."

The team managed all operations for the delivery of humanitarian aid and disaster relief supplies at the Ports of Laem Chabang and Chuk Samet, Thailand. Their efforts included the discharge of a high-speed vessel and preparations for ships from the Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three. Additionally, the team worked split operations at the aerial port of debarkation in Singapore.

As the single port manager, the 599th DDST used radio frequency identification tag technology during the mission to ensure 100 percent in-transit visibility for the commander of the Combined Task Force 536.

Equipment and cargo for the operation included the delivery of the first humvees, cargo trucks and fork lifts; as well as, food, fuel, medical supplies, construction and road building equipment, electrical power generating equipment, airfield matting and a Navy field hospital.

During the discharge of the Westpac Express High Speed Vessel, the 599th DDST managed the offload of more than 90 Marines and 75 pieces of equipment at the Port of Chuk Samet, Thailand.

The Marines aboard the vessel, from the 7th Communications Battalion, Okinawa, Japan, brought the first mili-

Marines from the 7th Communications Battalion, Okinawa, Japan, make their way off a High Speed Vessel at the Port of Chuk Samet, Thailand.



tary vehicles to the area, said Mr. Fred Artis, 599th DDST Operations Officer from the 835th Transportation Battalion, Japan.

Members of SDDC traditionally operate the Port of Chuk Samet during exercises and operations in Thailand, said Artis. "So, our presence here is vital, because we have vast knowledge and understanding for the port's capabilities."

With extensive knowledge of the area, members of the 599th DDST team ensured timely discharge and accurate accountability for the equipment by creating tally checkpoints for the Marines and their cargo.

"The main function for us during this process was to ensure an accurate count of the discharged equipment and cargo," said Sgt. 1st Class Frank Viray, Headquarters, 599th Transportation Group. "The information was then entered into the Worldwide Port System, where commanders had visibility of these resources in the delivery process."

During other vessel operations and APOD initiatives, the 599th DDST relied on the RFID system to give an accurate account of the supplies being delivered to the people affected by the tsunami.


Sgt. 1st Class Paul Guerrero, from the 835th Trans. Bn. said, "As each piece of required equipment was dis-

charged from the ship, it was be marked with an RFID tag. Then the tag is then scanned and imported into WPS, so commanders can track the equipment as it makes its way to the final destination."

RFID tags are used for 100 percent of deploying cargo. The information contained within the tags provides leaders with information on what the equipment is and where it is going. This helps to develop a common operating picture on demand, which in turn provides leaders visibility of their capability flowing to the devastated areas of Thailand.

And, while some relief efforts may be scaling down, the 599th DDST's job is not yet complete. Six members of the team will soon be serving as authorities for continued port operations in Sri Lanka.

"The versatility and responsiveness of our group has gone unmatched during the operations here," said Lane. "We play a crucial role in ensuring that the right supplies are getting to where they're needed when they're needed."

The 599th Transportation Group and its subordinate units, under the command of Col. Thomas A. Harvey, provide deployment command and control, and support surface distribution operations for the PACOM Area of Responsibility and Operations. 

Master Sgt. Larry Yeley, from the 595th Transportation Group (Provisional) Southwest Asia, tallies cargo trucks for the Marine 7th Communications Battalion on the Port of Chuk Samet, Thailand.



Team Beaumont kicks-off OIF

Story and photos by Mitch Chandran, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

The 842nd Transportation Battalion kicked-off its support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III with the arrival and loading of Capes Knox, Race and Rise and the USNS Yano into Port Beaumont during the last two weeks of October.

The movement of nearly 2,900 tanks, trucks and support vehicles supports the mobilization of the 116th Brigade Combat Team and included nearly 85 percent of the unit's assets.

Port of Beaumont is no stranger to massive military deployments. Since Operation Iraqi Freedom began, the 842nd has managed the deployment of more than 38,000 tanks, trucks, and a variety of support vehicles to Southwest Asia.

"This is the beginning of another massive deployment," said Lt. Col. Brian Sundin, commander of the 842nd. "The cargo volume for OIF III is supposed to be as great as last year's, and last year was our busiest year ever."

"The port stays busy because of its location and proximity to deploying units," said Ken Pendergraft, terminal operations chief for the 842nd.

"Primarily, deploying units are coming out of the central parts of the United States," he said. "Also, rail carriers have good access to the port and the same is true for commercial truckers."

Transportation management specialist Luke Gygas is serving in his first field assignment. One of the newest members assigned to the 842nd, Gygas came to SDDC through an 18-month transportation management internship, which he completed in June.

The 842nd believes in spreading the leadership experience wealth by giving its members opportunities to lead various initiatives. Gygas received the opportunity to supervise the staging of equipment and loading of the Cape Race for this deployment.



The vast majority of vehicles and containers arrived into the Port of Beaumont by rail vessels moving nearly 2,900 tanks, trucks, support vehicles and numerous containers for Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

His responsibilities included coordinating with the Military Sealift Command for the vessel's arrival into port, making sure cargo earmarked for the vessel is received, overseeing staging of the equipment, solidifying the stow plans for the vessel and loading.

"Our job is to support the warfighter," said Gygas, "For this mission, we're supporting the deployment of the 116th by getting them to the battle."

Gygas said there is a lot involved in

moving a brigade out of the port: managing hazardous materials; coordinating inbound people, trains and trucks; and configuring ships. The goal is to load the vessels properly and safely to their maximum stow capacity.

Operational issues constantly arise during the course of any deployment or redeployment mission. Gygas credits all the members at the port for working to discover and avert potential problems. Being proactive maintains the

III with massive deployment




Offloading the vehicles to a staging area nearby the docks was carefully orchestrated utilizing as much open area adjacent to the docks without compromising cargo mix-up or safety.

*ail from military installations in neighboring states. This deployment involved four
rs full of equipment and supplies to support and sustain Soldiers fighting the War on*

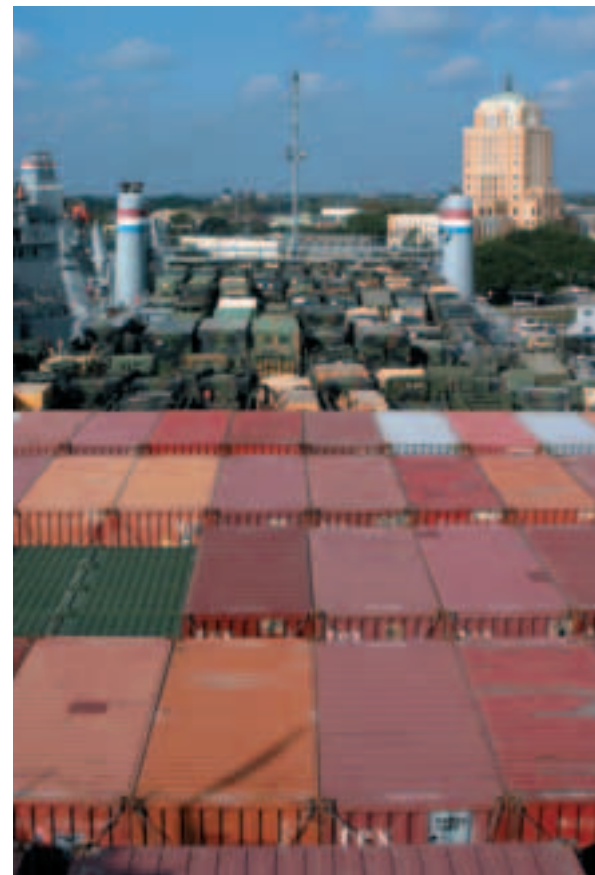
smooth flow of equipment, he said.

“We have a great team consisting of members of the 842nd, the Port of Beaumont, our stevedore contractor and union labors,” said Pendergraft. “We all realize there is a war being fought in Iraq and that getting this cargo to the Soldier is critical.”

The mobilization of the 116th marks the unit’s first major deployment.

The 116th consists of three armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a combat engineer battalion, a field artillery battalion and a support battalion. 

Once each vessel was fully loaded, the cargo made its way to Southwest Asia.



Technology and Teamwork move the Marines:

MOTSU loads out II Marine Expeditionary Force

By Maj. Karen Conley, Operations Officer
597th Transportation Terminal Group



Amphibious Assault Vehicles move up the stern ramp of the Cape Hudson to be deployed to OIF III.

(Photos by Jim Pleasants)

Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point personnel, Army reservists, Marines, and employees of the North Carolina

State Ports Authority worked together as a team to stage, document and load Marine Corps equipment and cargo for deployment to western Iraq.

For the fifth time this year MOTSU personnel have supervised the upload of II Marine Expeditionary Force equipment for deployment.

Since January, approximately 4,000 pieces of II MEF equipment have moved through the N.C. State Port at Wilmington. In this most recent operation, over 900 pieces of cargo began arriving for deployment from several North and South Carolina Marine Corps bases on Dec. 6, 2004. Loading of the Motor Vessel Cape Hudson began Dec. 13, 2004 and was completed within 36 hours.

MOTSU personnel provided Port Manager functions for the out-load and documentation assistance was provided from the 1184th Transportation Terminal Battalion out of Mobile, Alabama.

Documentation was a major part of this operation and MOTSU's Traffic Management Branch provided oversight to the 1184th to ensure all cargo was documented, while Cargo Operations Branch personnel ensured that all cargo was loaded in accordance with the pre-stow plan.

The Traffic Management Branch and 1184th converted cargo data from the Marine Corp's Marine Air Ground Task Force Deployment Support System II data to Defense Transportation Regulation standard formats in order to meet in-transit visibility requirements. All of the cargo was scanned as it came into the staging area and again as it was loaded onto the vessel. This provided an accurate count of equipment on the ground awaiting call forward to the vessel and once it was loaded.

In addition to equipment accountability, the second scan captured cargo stow locations to be passed, via the Worldwide Port System, to the Integrated Computerized Deployment System to create the "final" stow.

Personnel from the II MEF included embarkation officers who assisted with planning the load and the Port Operations Group, which is equivalent to an Army Port Support Activity. This out-load provided the Marines their first real experience with "tagging" 100 percent of their deploying equipment.

The use of Radio Frequency Identification is a Department of

Defense policy to be implemented by all deploying military units. "This was a very good learning experience for the Marines. It set us up for success with using this technology for follow on operations," stated Chief Warrant Officer 5 Gene Rose, the II MEF senior embarkation officer on site.

The RFID tags carry information unique to a given piece of cargo and provide commanders a "snapshot in time" of the cargo's location. The deploying unit is responsible for "burning" the information onto the tag hardware and affixing it to each piece of cargo. As the cargo passes an interrogation site, an interrogator reads the tag, and reports the tag number to the in-transit visibility server.

As the Marines equipment rolled through the port gate it was interrogated and reported as being located on N.C. State Port at Wilmington. These tags report movement of cargo providing DOD a means to track cargo.

The people of the Port of Wilmington also played a critical role in ensuring

the timely completion of the upload of the equipment.

"They were responsive to all our requirements on the port. Whatever we needed we got. Their staff attended all of our meetings and they really were part of our team," said Maj. Woodrow Willis, military port manager from MOTSU. "They also played a big role in Brig. Gen. Fletcher's visit to the operation, giving him a port tour and an opportunity to meet with Ports Authority CEO, Tom Eager," added Willis.

This was another opportunity for MOTSU and the Ports Authority to continue to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. Individuals from the military as well as the civilian sector were able to learn about unique Marine Corps equipment and the Marines furthered their knowledge of in-transit visibility technology. This deployment team gained valuable experience in joint operations as well as the use of technology to accomplish a strategic mission—all in a days work at MOTSU. 📍

Gene Rose, surface embarkation officer discusses the upload of II Marine Expeditionary Force equipment onto the Cape Hudson with SDDC commander, Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher, Jr.





Cargo is loaded aboard the USNS Sisler at the Port of Savannah, Ga.

New SDDC Task Force pioneers **end-to-end** distribution solutions

Story and photos by Patti Bielling, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Operations Center

A new specialty transportation unit has adopted an end-to-end focus that promises better service to deploying units, combatant commanders and transporters alike. The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's Task Force Marne borrowed its name from its customer, the 3rd Infantry Division "Rock of the Marne," which began deploying in early December to Iraq.

"This is how SDDC will be support-

ing deployment and redeployment into the future," said Brig. Gen. Maynard "Sandy" Sanders, Task Force commander. "The new focus on end-to-end support is in keeping with the command's new role as the surface distribution process owner."

As process owner, the command's responsibility for the surface movement of equipment and supplies extends beyond the ports, from origin to destination. This new mission and new

focus means that members of the Task Force will interface with the 3rd Infantry Division throughout the deployment to support activities at six installations, the departure port in Savannah, Ga., and the receiving port.

Planning began three months before the deployment to organize equipment and personnel as "Force Packages." A typical brigade-like Force Package contains a mix of capabilities, including combat and support vehicles and air-



Some cargo was railed to the port.



Capt. Fred Hoose of the 1189th Transportation Terminal Brigade documents and stages containers.



Staff Sgt. Henry Rivers of the 1189th Transportation Terminal Brigade documents vehicles on board the USNS Sisler.

craft, all of which will operate together in theater, Sanders said.

“By developing Force Packages, the combatant commander can devise the right mix of forces for a given situation and flow them into the theater in a synchronized manner,” Sanders said. “Deploying Force Packages also helps units move out faster by improving reception, staging and onward movement.”

Setting the stage for success was early and frequent communication with the Task Force and the division, said Rita Johanson, transportation officer for Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

“Task Force members sat down with us early and looked at our plan,” Johanson said. “They told us what they had to offer and helped augment and support our plan.”

At the departure port, the focus on unit integrity translated to less time marshalling and moving equipment in cargo yards, said Donald Kessler, the operations division manager and military liaison for the Georgia Port Authority.

“We gained real efficiencies,” Kessler said. “Using the Force Package concept

helped traffic flow smoothly on the port and streamlined vessel loading.”

Division logisticians said a closer working relationship with SDDC helped make the deployment process smoother. “I got a better understanding of SDDC’s capabilities and was able to plan better,” said Maj. Eric Shaw, logistics officer for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry. “That’s a good thing because we don’t have the time or resources to deal with problems on the other end.”

Another command initiative ensured radio frequency identification capability on 100 percent of the division equipment, resulting in complete asset visibility from end-to-end, said Col. Pete Lennon, commander of SDDC’s port operator, the 1189th Transportation Terminal Brigade of Charleston, S.C.


“The RFID capability supports both the unit and the transporter so they know where equipment is in the pipeline,” Lennon said. “RFID is the wave of the future; a lot of tracking and force-flow management systems will be built with this technology as a major component.”

When the deployment is complete, the Task Force will have moved more

than 2 million square feet of cargo for the division—enough to cover 35 football fields. Helping plan the massive move was Task Force operations officer Maj. Jeff Robinson. Robinson will be among the Task Force Soldiers meeting the equipment in theater and interfacing with the unit responsible for unloading the equipment at the receiving port, the 1174th Transportation Terminal Brigade, Flushing, N.Y.

“The Task Force will be the single face to the 3rd Infantry Division from the planning stages to the end of the deployment process,” Robinson said. “This new way of doing business allows the unit commanders to focus less on deployment and more on moving out and accomplishing the mission.”

The majority of the equipment is from the 3rd Infantry’s home installation, Fort Stewart, Ga. Other cargo came from Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Benning, Ga., Fort Bragg, N.C., Fort Riley, Kan., Fort Campbell, Ky., and Fort Sill, Okla.

No stranger to the theater, the division is embarking on its second tour in Iraq and is scheduled for a yearlong deployment. 

Vehicles are staged in preparation for loading on the ship.



New equipment supports more efficient cargo handling at Sunny Point

By Maj. Karen Conley, Operations Officer
597th Transportation Terminal Group



The rail mounted intermodal terminal transfer crane can easily lift 2 fully loaded ammunition containers using its spreader bar at the same time. The crane has a 52 short-ton lifting capacity.

(Photos by Jim Pleasants)

New equipment procured at Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point is expected to save money and improve the container throughput capability in the terminal.

The purchase of the new container and material handling equipment was based on a 2003 modernization plan and a Department of Defense requirement to transship 10,000 containers in 14 days.

In 2002, Col. Ronald P. Heiter, the MOTSU commander at the time, wrote his vision statement that included a five year equipment recapitalization program as part of a larger plan to decrease operating costs, increase productivity, enhance customer service, and support the DOD requirement. This initiative has continued to be vigorously implemented by MOTSU personnel and the current commander,

Col. James A. Chen.

“This is an evolving plan. We are constantly reassessing it as requirements evolve and lessons are learned. Do we need to add equipment or re-evaluate what we are planning to purchase based on mission requirements? If extra funding becomes available we can move ahead of our time-line,” said Chen. “We need the proper tools to keep operations efficient and safe while moving into the 21st century.”

DOD has been gradually moving to 100 percent containerization of munitions since the early 1970s. Ninety percent of the ammunition that now comes through MOTSU is containerized. Among the goals of the MOTSU Strategic Plan, published last year, is to improve efficiency of the terminal by upgrading operational processes, developing automated cargo management

systems, and procuring installation support equipment to support the near exclusive use of containers.

As a result, the terminal is beginning to turn the corner in transforming from a purely break-bulk terminal to a full-fledged container terminal.

“We knew we had to maximize the movement of containers to keep the ship working and the way to do that was to move two twenty-foot containers at a time,” said Steve Kerr, the transportation manager at MOTSU. “We did a cost benefit analysis of double loading also known as picking, which showed we could move 1,856 containers in eight days instead of 12 by double picking. Other studies have shown similar results.”

“Our former fleet of 40- foot chassis was not capable of handling double picked loads of up to 105,820 lbs. We

The terminal tractor and the 40 ft bomb-cart are now vital to the simultaneous movement of 2 fully loaded containers in the terminal. The Mi-Jack reach stacker has a 45-ton capacity.



had to focus on procuring the right equipment to do the job. We started looking for commercially available container handling and materiel handling equipment through the Defense Logistics Agency's Prime Vendor ... which made the procurement process extremely efficient," said Kerr.

The cornerstone of the new equipment procurement plan was to purchase commercially available equipment capable of moving two containers loaded at maximum gross weight. This included Mi-Jack reach stackers, yard tractors, spreader bars, container handlers, and 45-foot corner-less side gathering bomb-carts. The 45-foot port chassis (bomb-carts) increases productivity and saves time and money because it can haul two containers at once and it eliminates the need for additional labor to remove twist locks under the crane.

"The goal is to keep the yard tractors and chassis moving, utilizing one chassis to continuously move two containers," said Chuck Shadid, chief of the logistics division at MOTSU. "This saves at least two minutes per container because the driver does not have to unhook the chassis and retrieve another one. The containers will simply be

offloaded on a holding pad instead of remaining uploaded on a chassis. This is where we gain additional efficiency."


The terminal is planning to eliminate seven hundred old 1960's vintage 20-foot chassis and replace them with twenty-four, 45-foot bomb cart port chassis. As a result of these new purchases there will be fewer pieces of equipment and fewer numbers of fleets resulting in a more streamlined maintenance process. Twelve bomb carts have already been purchased as well as 12-yard tractors to pull them.

Additional improvements include a refurbishment of a container transfer crane and the purchase of a new \$3 million rail mounted transfer crane. Both cranes facilitate the use of rail into the terminal that lowers second destination transportation and port handling cost. The current fleet of gas and electric forklifts are being replaced with commercial diesel forklifts better suited for heavier weighted ammunition containers and both MOTSU PACECO wharf cranes have been refurbished.

There are also plans to upgrade rail spurs to accommodate current industry rail fleets by fiscal year 2006 and funds have been programmed in fiscal year

2007 to convert the Center Wharf from a break-bulk capable wharf to a container capable wharf with three container cranes to better service today's commercial container vessels. The new equipment is already proving its mettle.

Operation Iraqi Freedom exports and the recent reset of the Army and Air Force Ammo Preposition Afloat programs have provided ample opportunity to practice new business processes that this new equipment supports.

While the 2003 Strategic Plan outlines the vision and road map for equipment recapitalization, it is the MOTSU operations staff, logistics personnel, and the stevedore contractor who are pushing to leverage efficiency from this new equipment. When the full complement of equipment is on hand and the new container wharf is built at the current Center Wharf with its three new container cranes, it is fully expected that a savings of 50 percent can be achieved in time and money. There is a new excitement at MOTSU as it works hard to transform itself from a 20th Century break-bulk facility to a 21st Century container terminal with state of the art equipment, business processes, and management tools. 

Texas ports gain new support unit

By LaWanda York, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters



Left: Spc. Crystal Betts and Staff Sgt. Chris Lambert verify the military shipping label is correct on the vehicle.

(Photo by Maj. John Weakland)

Bottom: (From left to right) Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Zimmerman, Maj. Joseph Demartini, Maj. William Bergeron, Capt. Timothy Monaghan, Sgt. 1st Class Darin Keys, Maj. Gary Nichol stand in front of the USNS Benavidez.

(Photo by Maj. Laura Bowen)



After serving two years at the Port of Corpus Christi and Port of Beaumont in Texas, the 1192nd Transportation Terminal Brigade, New Orleans, La., headed home and the 1395th Transportation Terminal Brigade, Fort Lawton, Wash. took over the duties as support unit for the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

The 1395th's mission is to operate as the single port manager for all military cargo at the Port of Corpus Christi. In addition, a permanent party of approximately 20 Soldiers supports the 842nd Transportation Battalion, an active duty unit located at the Port of Beaumont.

"Our Soldiers bring their civilian skills to the brigade which are particu-

larly helpful in our relations with the other agencies we work with on the port," said Col. Caryl Buford, commander of the 1395th. "We are absolutely committed to getting deployment cargo to the port of debarkation in good shape, ready to employ, correctly documented so it can be immediately married up with the owner."

In addition to providing support to Operation Iraqi Freedom, the unit will continue to support deployments and

redeployments to exercises and Kosovo Force rotations.

"The 1395th team has impressed me at every turn," said Lt. Col. Brian P. Sundin, commander of the 842nd. "The headquarters has already supported OIF deployment and redeployment and New Horizons missions—talk

Lessons will shape future unit training

about jumping into the fire!”

As the single port manager, the 1395th is responsible for providing in-transit visibility of all military cargo entering or leaving the port and ensuring the cargo is properly handled to minimize damage.

When equipment arrives at the port, the 1395th inspects and scans it and downloads the data into the World Wide Port System, a UNIX based system that is used to track all military cargo throughout the globe. Once scanned, the cargo is staged at the port by the terminal section to facilitate the loading of a ship or the disposition of cargo to different installations.

As the equipment is loaded onto a vessel, rail car, or truck, it is inspected and scanned again. The WPS system generates reports and numbers that are used by SDDC to maintain intransit visibility and to track how the equipment was loaded so that the civilian contractors are correctly paid.

When planning and loading a vessel, the unit's Integrated Computerized Deployment System section is busy at work preparing the preliminary and final stow plans. The ICODES section loads the vessel while trying to minimize the effects the equipment will place on the ship.

“Most importantly, this particular group of individuals serves as the eyes and ears of the unit and ensures all military equipment is intact during the loading process,” said Buford.

Sundin said Soldiers from the 1395th who have joined ‘Team Beaumont’ have been crucial to its operations.

“Our Soldiers have adopted Corpus Christi as their community,” said Buford. “They are participating in community programs as individuals and as teams in charitable programs such as adopt-a-school, serving food to the needy, and assisting other charitable organizations.”

Story and photo by Patti Bielling, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Operations Center

Leaders from Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command units are drawing on their experiences in current operations to help mold training for the future.

Active and reserve members from around the globe met with the command's training developers Dec. 15-17 in Williamsburg, Va., to begin devising new unit training objectives known as mission-essential task lists.

An updated task list is important given the command's expanded mission, which recently grew from managing and operating ports to overseeing the surface distribution of cargo from origin to destination, said Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher, Jr., commander.

“We're also moving to expeditionary operations, and we'll need to hit the ground with world-class capabilities,” Fletcher told the assembled leaders. “We need the input from you, the experts in the field, to create a trained and ready expeditionary capability.”

“There's a need to transform, even while we're at war,” said Lt. Col. Brian Sundin, commander of the 842nd Transportation Battalion, Beaumont, Texas. “At the battalion level, we appreciate being part of the process from the beginning, instead of the recipient of a product at the end.”

Leaders worked in small groups to develop suggested training objectives for the headquarters, transportation groups, rail battalions, active and reserve terminal battalions and deployment support brigades.

The timing is right for updating the



April Selby-Cole and Susan Allen from the Operations Center discuss training issues with Lt. Col. Patrick Lyons, commander of the 840th Transportation Battalion.

new task list, especially now that the command has assumed training oversight of its war-traced reserve units, said Col. Robert Askey, director of Training Readiness and Mobilization.

Until early 2004, the U.S. Army Reserve Command had oversight of training and readiness for these units that, upon mobilization, fall under SDDC's command and control.

“By standardizing training and making sure it's battle-focused, we can better ensure unit readiness and better realize our vision of a modular structure in the near future,” said Askey..

The workshop was a first step in the development of the new mission-essential task lists. Conference attendees will continue to provide input remotely until the process is complete.

The final products are scheduled to be published in July, Askey said.

Joint work environment offer training venue for new transportation specialist

Story and photos by Robyn Mack, Public Affairs Specialist
599th Transportation Group

What are vessel operations? – Seems like an easy enough question for the seasoned Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command member.

But, as a new member, vessel operations are much more – they're a vital part of on-the-job training and an essential look into the SDDC mission.

During the redistribution of the III Marine Expeditionary Force Jan. 31 at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Mr. Edwin Ancheta got his first hands-on experience with vessel operations since joining the 599th Transportation Group two months ago.

While Ancheta is no newbie to the transportation world – he has more than 25 years of experience with the Air Force – one day on a Deployment and Distribution Support Team proved to be very educational.

"What I experienced was a larger magnitude of operations compared to what I've done in the past," Ancheta said. "This was my first time as a traffic management specialist to interface with other agencies to do terminal operations in a joint environment. Working with other experienced terminal operators has given me the opportunity to further my knowledge."

And, according to Mr. David Bertao, the DDST team leader, providing Ancheta with guidance during the

Edwin Ancheta, (left) 599th Transportation Group specialist, gets on-the-job training of the Worldwide Port System hand-held scanner from Mr. David Bertao, 599th Deployment and Distribution

Team leader, during the Jan. 31 vessel operations for the MV Green Point. Training is a vital part of learning the SDDC mission.



operation was crucial in developing his skills. "This was his first DDST mission, so there was a lot for him to see."

According to Ancheta, the offload of more than 160 pieces of equipment and cargo was a great experience.

"I learned how to operate the Worldwide Port System hand-held scanner, including how to obtain cargo Transportation Control Number which contains the vehicle nomenclature, length, width, height and total weight," he said. "Additionally, Fleet and Industrial Supply Center, Pearl Harbor, personnel showed me how to download data from the scanner to the WPS system to create data to be used for 100 percent in-transit visibility."

Other aspects of the training included: administering and ensuring proper receipt, offloading, and documentation processing for all of the Department of Defense shipment like rolling stock and containers; inspections of each off-loaded container; visual checks for possible damage; and, verification that all the rolling stock matched the model and serial number in the TCN data.

Ancheta said, overall the vessel operations allowed him a chance for application.

"I enjoyed working together as a team to do the mission," the transportation specialist said. "It allowed me to familiarize myself with and train with Military Ocean Terminal pier operators and staff, as well as other agencies for an end result toward becoming a world class port operator and traffic manager."

The 599th DDST in cooperation with FISC, Pearl Harbor, conducted the vessel discharge and staging operations for the MV Green Point. The III MEF's equipment was redistributed from Okinawa, Japan to Marine Corps units at Marine Base Kaneohe, Hawaii. 🇺🇸



MV Green Point comes to port at Ford Island, Pearl Harbor Hawaii. The Green Point carried more than 160 pieces of equipment and cargo from the III Marine Expeditionary

Force to be redistributed to Marine Corps units in Kaneohe, Hawaii.

Augmentation at ports is part of formula for success

Story and photo by Mitch Chandran, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

Large deployments of military cargo through seaports are a reality for the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. Augmentees' assisting battalions in the field have been essential ingredients in the recipe for success.

The 842nd Transportation Battalion at Port Beaumont has capitalized on this concept by sponsoring more than 200 augmentees during the past two years with the support of SDDC Operations Center.

Using experts from both the Operations Center and Army reserve units adds value to port operations and is essential for successfully managing large scale deployment or redeployment missions, said Lt. Col. Brian Sundin, commander of the 842nd.

"Using augmentees benefits the command in three ways, said Sundin.

"The first benefit is that SDDC meets the needs of the immediate mission," he said. "Second, folks from the headquarters staff get a chance to come down and hone their skills. And third, when employees go back to headquarters, they go back more knowledgeable of what's happening out in the field."

With seven military and 31 civilians assigned to the 842nd, the unit relies on contract labor to stage and stow cargo and Port Support Activity units to operate, stage and service vehicles at the port. However, other special skills are sometimes required to get large cargo missions in and out of port quickly and safely.

"Also needed at the port are those with Worldwide Port System and Electronic Transportation Acquisition/Global Freight Management experience," said Rose Ann Alderete, transportation operations specialist for the 842nd.



Staging and loading cargo onto vessels is only part of a deployment. Augmentees assist the port in many ways and also get to see first-hand a variety of port activities.

Hamilton contributed to the mission's success by managing rail movement of deploying military equipment earmarked for Soldiers serving in Southwest Asia.

Part of her responsibility included working with the major railroads. Her mornings at Port Beaumont started with a telephone conference with SDDC Operations Center's rail

team, major railroad representatives, and port and installation representatives involved in deployment and redeployment moves.

"I would make sure everyone knew what Port Beaumont's needs were, and how much rail we could actually take in," said Hamilton. "The main thing was to get the equipment into the port on time for vessel loading and ensure enough empty rail for offloading."

"You get to see your support of the warfighter in real-time," said Hamilton. "I get excited because it is such a challenge to move cargo and I want to outdo myself every time. It's a rewarding job and I feel a part of history."

Sundin said it's not easy for the Operations Center, or any organization, to voluntarily let their people go for any period of time to augment in the field, especially when everyone these days is doing more with less. "Still," he said, "the Center continues to send quality people to augment the ports that need them." 🌐

The WPS tracks all cargo, including hazardous material, sensitive cargo and supercargo (people). The Electronic Transportation Acquisition is used to generate commercial bills of lading for both truck and rail shipments.

Alderete said augmentees don't necessarily have to possess just those two skills. Those who are flexible and have knowledge of cargo and terminal operations add value as well. "We have a two-week training course that we give reservists who are activated to work on the traffic management side of the house," she said.

One specialist who applied her skills to augment the 842nd is Master Sgt. Ingrid Hamilton, a traffic management specialist at SDDC Operations Center, Fort Eustis, Va.

She is one of about 20 augmentees temporarily assigned to the 842nd while the unit moved massive amounts of cargo in October at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom III.

1174th TTB returns from Kuwait

By Spc. Charles Siler, Staff Writer
The Wheel



Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher, Jr., SDDC commander, salutes the returning Soldiers during the ceremony.

Nearly 60 Soldiers were welcomed home Feb. 1, 2005 at Anderson Field House, Fort Eustis, Va., after serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom for one year.

The Soldiers are part of the 1174th Transportation Terminal Battalion, a reserve unit from Fort Totten, N.Y. The 1174th is a subsidiary unit of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

"It's great to be home," said Lt. Col. Raymond Minott, 1174th's commander. "Now we can say, 'Job accomplished.'"

While deployed to ports in both Iraq and Kuwait, the Soldiers participated in the largest movement of U.S. forces since World War II. The battalion also participated in a port-record five-vessel simultaneous load and discharge operation in Kuwait, according to an SDDC release.

"I am absolutely proud of the Soldiers of this battalion," said Minott. "Not only did they meet the standards, but they grew to exceed them. They were loading and off-loading ships faster than they were modeled to be. I am also proud of their families' sacrifices. These Soldiers couldn't do their jobs if their wives, husbands, boyfriends, girlfriends, all the way down to their children, didn't support them."

While exceeding the standard, the battalion put up impressive numbers during their time in the Middle East, moving more than 28 million square feet of cargo.

The unit returned home just two days after the Iraqi elections.

"The high turn-out for the elections points out to myself and my Soldiers that the last year we spent away from our families wasn't in vain," said Minott. 🇺🇸



The crowd welcomes the Soldiers home.

(Photos by Tom Barker)

New unit begins managing containers

By Patti Bielling, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Operations Center

Moving supplies to Soldiers in a theater of war is a daunting task. However, managing the movement of thousands of containers that carry those supplies can be an even bigger job.

A Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command unit has accepted the challenge of managing containers in the U.S. Central Command theater.

In mid-January, the 184th Container Management Element left its National Guard headquarters in Laurel, Miss., for Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The unit, part of the 184th Transportation Command Element, assumed responsibility for a territory that stretches from the Horn of Africa to central Asia, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

Their mission is to gain better visibility over more than 44,000 of the 20- and 40-foot boxes being used in the theater.

Operations in hostile territories present a lot of challenges for container managers, said Maj. Vernon Newman of the 184th CME.

"If you're a commander fighting a war, you've got too many alligators biting at you to keep up with containers," the operations officer said in a phone interview from Kuwait. "The 184th is here to manage containers so the war fighter can focus more on those other missions."

Establishing the container management element was just one part of a concept-of-operations plan developed by a 12-person team from SDDC. The team assembled in August at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, under the direction of Col. Bob Petrillo, who heads the Command Transformation Integration Office. Container management is a complex issue that is interrelated with many other logistics and supply processes, Petrillo said.

"We want to hit this on as many fronts as we possibly can," he said. "We are looking at developing force struc-

SFC Johnny Blackett of the Kuwait Detachment of the 831st Transportation Battalion and local contract employees transload supplies at a cross-docking facility in Kuwait. (Photo courtesy of 831st Trans. Bn.)



ture, doctrine, information technology. We think that a lot of what we do in CENTCOM will help us in developing a global container management process."

One of the greatest challenges to tracking containers in an unimproved area is that Soldiers often use containers for multiple purposes, said Lt. Col. James "Reggie" Hall, operations officer for the team.

"Containers are a versatile resource," he said. "When you go to war in a desert, there is no place to secure supplies or keep them out of the sun and sand, so a lot of containers that go into Iraq stay as storage facilities," he said. "Soldiers also use them for office space, shelter and force protection. Although not the original purpose, these are still, arguably, valid uses for containers."

Mapping and assessing the container process—how containers move and are used in the theater—was one of the team's first steps. Once they understood and validated the process, they developed an information technology tool to fit the process, Hall said.

The Container Management Support Tool is a Web-accessible database that documents the location and status of all containers as they move throughout the theater. The tool will allow users to show snapshots and track trends of container activity, Hall said.

"A commander can't make decisions about containers unless he has this


data," said Hall. "This is not a total solution, but it meets an important need until a global container management system is developed."

In addition, the command has set up a new cross-docking facility in Kuwait where supplies bound for certain areas of the theater are being moved from carrier-owned containers into government ones for transit to certain areas of the theater. This effort will allow more timely return of carrier-owned containers, Hall said.

The command is also working with commercial partners to finalize Universal Services Contract 2005 that would refine the way DOD acquires containers during contingencies, Petrillo said.

"We need the flexibility to respond to different crises and different phases of a contingency," said Petrillo. "We are working with our commercial partners to find solutions that won't disrupt their business model while meeting the needs of the war fighter."

On any given day, more than 4,000 containers are on the move to sustain U.S. Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines all over the world. Nearly all supplies—from food to ammunition, repair parts to construction material—are shipped in containers.

Containerization enables use of commercial carriers, ports and equipment, and makes loading, stacking and shipping easier across all modes of transport. 

What I Did on my winter vacation

By Lee Strong, Traffic Management Specialist
SDDC G5 (Deployment & Distribution Analysis Division)



The Arabian Gulf and ships as seen from the SDDC port operations areas at Ash Shuaiba, Kuwait. The picture of the ships in the water illustrates the dock that is behind the concrete slab in the picture opposite page. (Photos courtesy of the 595th Transportation Group (Provisional))

“Got any special plans for the holidays?”

“Live in a warehouse with 50 other guys in the middle of a desert with terrorists not too far away, eat industrial food three times a day, and work 72 hours a week including Saturdays and Sundays. How about you?”

O.K. That’s a fictional conversation, but I really did spend my 2004 Christmas and New Year’s holidays in the middle of the Kuwaiti desert doing my part for the War on Terrorism.

One of the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command’s many missions is container management and one of the many required tasks is analyzing data and presenting metrics to the SDDC and Central Command leadership.

I got picked to spend my winter vaca-

tion away from home because of my background in operations research and systems analysis and corporate metrics. Many people were considered but only a few had the necessary skills, willingness to go, and health. So off I went... to Fort Eustis, Virginia for deployment training.

Previously, I knew that SDDC’s Operations Center directed cargo movements around the world. Now, I saw another side – the people who train and equip soldiers and civilians to deploy. Two days of medical examinations determined that I was physically fit to go. Five vaccinations in 2 minutes is something that you don’t soon forget. As it was, the doctors skipped the flu vaccine because I had a raging head cold at the time!

I was also outfitted with the full “battle rattle” of Desert Camouflage

Uniforms, body armor, gas mask and chemical oversuit. Kuwait really is a nice place but 9/11 proved that bad guys could reach everywhere. The Deployment Branch got me ready with intensive training in safety and force protection, first aid, and operating in chemical environments. No weapons, though. Civilians do their part by supporting the shooters, not shooting themselves. It all became final on Thanksgiving Day when a nurse officially declared that I had no negative reaction to the vaccinations. Suddenly, all systems were “Go.”

The flight over was routine. There was an added chill passing over Iraq where terrorists take pot shots at aircraft while dodging our guys and gals, but we arrived safely.

Kuwait itself is a flat desert reminiscent of parts of southern California –

The seal shown on the concrete slab is the UNOFFICIAL 595th seal. The slab lists the names of the various units that comprise the 595th Transportation Group.



monotonous tan sand relieved by occasional plants that are mostly tan themselves. Most of the people live in or near Kuwait City – which is a fascinating mixture of the modern and the timeless – and its gritty port and industrial suburbs. Much of the architecture is blocky brick and concrete. The reason is the pitiless sun that bleaches everything it touches. As a result, Kuwaitis reserve their best architectural efforts for the insides of their buildings with results that show why “the Arabian Nights” is a synonym for exotic splendor.

Most Kuwaitis are personable and professional. All of those that I come in contact with speak adequate English ... which is more than I can say about my Arabic!

Camp Arifjan is a major Coalition logistical base for much of Operation Iraqi Freedom. It's a Spartan slice of American life in the middle of the desert where the countless details of supporting the war go on day and night. Up-arming vehicles? This is where it gets done.

I'm lucky. I do live in a converted warehouse bay with 50 other guys in the same room and a bathroom down the hall. A lot of guys and gals live in tents instead. We do eat well. O.K., we eat a lot. The dining facilities offer a multitude of food choices each day. Nothing gourmet; it's basic American food including hamburgers and hot dogs, but also chicken, fish and beef entrees, soups, salads, fruits, and deserts. One soldier checking my identity doesn't know what an “SDDC” is. I tell him that we're the people who hauled the food he's eating and the stuff he's using. He thinks that's a good idea and lets me in.

Checking identities is part of everyday life here. Safety and security are constant concerns with the bad guys so close and so much industrial equipment in use. Barbed wire, concrete barriers, tire claws, and “unfriendly” speed bumps to prevent anyone from ramming the gates surround the camp. More importantly, the camp is inhabited by hundreds of well-trained, well-armed Coalition service members.

Life is not all grim duty. The service members are on duty 24/7 and the civilian work week is 12/6. A lot of people do extra work for lack of any other entertainment. But there are a variety of amusements including movies, a theater, a library and community center, gymnasiums, and countless sports.

Christmas, Hanukah, New Year's and major US holidays are all workdays. But spiritual values are not neglected. On Christmas Eve, some of our Kuwaiti contractors hosted a dinner that included Christmas songs, skits, humor, and presents. A Jewish employee gave “Twas the Night Before Christmas” a special SDDC interpretation and his Christian colleagues wished him “Happy Hanukah!” And where else in the world does Santa Claus arrive riding a camel?

So the work here is long and often frustrating, but it's also challenging and rewarding. Everyone here is doing his or her part against terrorism.

O.K. It's not really a vacation, but it is an adventure... and a pretty good way to spend the holidays. ☺

Changes for the SDDC community in Holland

By Bram de Jong and Martin Weteling, Command Affairs Officers,
598th Transportation Group



An aerial picture of the 'Van Ghentkazerne' in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. The 598th Transportation Terminal Group will be co-located there with the Royal Netherlands Marines. A new building will be built behind the current track field.

(Photo courtesy of the 598th Transportation Terminal Group Command Affairs Office)

After a time of uncertainty there is light on the horizon for the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command personnel working for the 598th Transportation Terminal Group and 838th Transportation Battalion, both located in Capelle aan den IJssel, The Netherlands.

The U.S. Army's SDDC assets will move to the 'Van Ghentkazerne' in Rotterdam.

This relocation is primarily predicated by the reality that in today's world tighter force protection measures are required. Those increased force protection measures are the principal reason for moving the SDDC community from Capelle aan den IJssel to the Van Ghentkazerne. The office facility in Capelle aan den IJssel is located in the middle of a civilian industrial estate comprised of a printer, laundry facility, several furniture stores and various other office buildings, which surround the SDDC building.

Before the events of September 11, 2001, the SDDC building was inconspicuous. However, after that date stricter security measures have changed the visible profile and have also required the facility to be secured by Netherlands' Armed Soldiers.

Negotiations to realize this move are ongoing. Many parties, to include, the U.S. Embassy in Den Haag, NL, the Rotterdam City and Port Authorities, and the Netherlands' Ministry of Defense are involved in these negotiations.

"For reasons of efficiency SDDC chooses to co-locate with the Royal Netherlands' Marine Corps", said Col. Gary R. Stanley, commander of the 598th.

"Retention of the unit in the Netherlands assures the flow of goods and supplies supporting the U.S. Forces and their families throughout Europe will continue to move through commercial ports in the region for the foreseeable future," said Stanley.

Royal Netherlands Marine Corps Colonel Eric Blommesteijn, commander of the van Ghentkazerne is very happy to host SDDC.

"We welcome the SDDC unit. This international cooperation in our "caserne" will be very good for our young Marines who are deployable worldwide. We are also looking in sharing facilities which will optimize efficiency," he said.

Although office space was offered in Germany, SDDC made the decision to maintain its European headquarters in the Netherlands. This decision was based on force protection, retention of the experienced Dutch workforce, and other practical reasons that would affect the community. The high SDDC operational tempo of moving cargo through ocean ports in Europe and Southwest Asia makes it critical that personnel turbulence be kept to the minimum and by relocating within the Rotterdam community SDDC was able to retain all of their highly experienced Dutch employ-

598th commanders conference held in Holland

By Bram de Jong, Command Affairs Officer
598th Transportation Terminal Group

ees.

"Since March 2004 there has been a degree of unrest among the Dutch workforce due to the projected relocation," said Pierre Hoogstad, the Dutch MoD personnel officer.

"Several places were surveyed as possible relocation sites to include various locations in Germany, Italy, and the former Eastern Block countries. It is good news that the decision has been made to move to the Van Ghentkazerne. It is really close to the present location", said Hoogstad.

"By moving to the Van Ghentkazerne we are able to combine security efforts, we keep the host nation workforce and we don't have to move our family members to a different location in a different country," said Stanley.

The Van Ghentkazerne is located only 15 minutes (about 5 KM) away from our present location.

"At this moment we follow two tracks. One track is tracing the formal approvals while the other track works with the NL and U.S. officials on a packet of requirements and the structure design following U.S. and Dutch regulations. It looks like it will take a period of at least two years," said Stanley.

The move of the SDDC community will also include tenant units: the Department of Homeland Security representatives, the United States Coast Guard Activity – Europe, the Military Sealift Command Office Northern Europe, the 623rd Movement Control Team- Rotterdam, and the USAF Liaison Office.

The Van Ghentkazerne is one of the Royal Netherlands' Marine Corps barracks. The Caserne was built in 1946 after its previous location was destroyed in the early days of World War II. For quite a long time it has been the location where Dutch Marine recruits start their military career.

Located in the city of Rotterdam, The Caserne is named after Baron Joseph Van Ghent (1626-1672), the first Dutch Marine Commander in 1665. 🌱

Setting out a structure for the future was the common goal that brought together battalion and company commanders, terminal managers and additional 598th Transportation Terminal Group staff for a three-day conference in Capelle aan den IJssel, The Netherlands.

"The purpose of the conference is to streamline operations and get us all focused accordingly on the way ahead," said Col. Gary R. Stanley, commander of the 598th Transportation Terminal Group, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

"We have a high operational tempo and a busy workload. Our area of operations cover Europe, Africa and a part of South West Asia which means that most of the time we do business using phone and e-mail," said Stanley.

Stanley opened the conference Oct. 13, 2004 by informing attendees about what's expected from the 598th leadership and workforce in the near future.

"Operations must be standardized with the understanding that any operation is unique yet similar. We must be prepared to be flexible, and be prepared to execute operations in areas outside our day-to-day area of operations, when required," said Stanley. "This applies to our entire workforce, military, Department of the Army Civilians and the large number of host nation civilians."

All four battalion commanders and terminal managers presented their own specific battalion issues requiring resolution. In follow-up sessions, issues such as the streamlining of container management and stevedoring contracts, visibility of freight in the World Port System, and personnel training were discussed extensively.

Lt. Col. Wally Gonzalez, commander

of the 838th Transportation Battalion and his personnel briefed recent Operation Iraqi Freedom operations in Antwerp, Belgium, which will now serve as a template for future port operations.

It's the command's goal to standardize operations as much as possible so all members of the 598th understand the standard when deployed to execute operations in any port within the area of responsibility, said Gonzalez.

"We understand that every port is different due its characteristics and local rules; however, there are some basic port operations functions that must be conducted regardless of location, for example, safety measures, documentation procedures, stow plan coordination, etc. In today's Army where each and every employee and Soldier is a player contributor, it is important that when 598th personnel deploy, they hit the ground running because they know how to conduct port operations regardless of the location," said Gonzalez.

Lt. Col. Pat Lyons, commander of the 840th Transportation Battalion, Turkey, said his primary focus is to define and refine his new mission in Kuwait and prepare for the permanent relocation of his headquarters from Izmir, Turkey to Kuwait.

"This conference allows for 'frank' discussions to occur utilizing the vast experience of all the attendees. This is not the first time that a SDDC unit has found itself moving to a new location and it certainly won't be the last," said Lyons, adding, "Our mission has always been to support the needs of the warfighter and those needs change in both scope and location. This requires a continual evaluation and readjustments as necessary." 🌱

SDDC's new deputy to the commander on board

By LaWanda York, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command welcomed its newest Senior Executive Service member.

Patricia M. Young, Deputy to the Commander, SDDC, began her tour on Feb. 7.

She is responsible for facilitating continuous improvement and innovation in the development of distribution policies, plans and programs supporting the SDDC global mission. This mission includes joint service deployments and logistics operations.

Gen. John W. Handy, commander of the United States Transportation Command, reassigned Young to SDDC. Senior executives are in the same category as a military flag officer and can be reassigned, normally every three to five years.

"Being at USTRANSCOM, I had the opportunity to work with SDDC, but now it is going to be much more personal and up close," said Young. "It is a great command and we have great people—I'm just excited to be part of it."

Young began her federal service career in 1985 as an intern in the Palace Acquire Career Program with the U.S. Air Force Materiel Command, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio. After eight years with the Air Force Materiel Command, the command went through a reduction in forces and Young was notified that her position was caught in the reduction. She would have to find a new job.

USTRANSCOM was just starting to ramp up as a unified command and that intrigued her to apply for a posi-

Patricia M. Young began her tour with SDDC on Feb. 7.

(Photo by LaWanda York)



tion in the logistics directorate. She was hired in August 1993.

"I was not familiar with the joint world," said Young. "It was an eye opening experience. You gain an appreciation for the Warfighter, who your customer was and what the Services all contributed."

So far in her career, Young had worked for an Air Force Command and a joint service command, now she was given an opportunity to work for an Army major command. "This is a huge career broadening opportunity for me," said Young. "Still the focus is Warfighter support and you are still supporting all the services. I will gain

a much better appreciation for the Army."

SDDC is a customer service organization—with the Warfighter as its customer. Young said SDDC has proven that nobody does military transportation better by the results of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Contributing to the command's ability to stay on the leading edge is what she is focusing on.

"I hope to bring from the senior leadership view an understanding and an appreciation of what is going on with deployment and distribution," said Young. 🌱

SDDC's newest general officer will assume operations duties

Story and photos by Patti Bielling, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Operations Center

A newly promoted Army reservist will soon become the acting deputy commander and director of operations for the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

Brig. Gen. Maynard "Sandy" Sanders will take on the new role at the command's Operations Center at Fort Eustis, Va., when Brig. Gen. Mark Scheid deploys to Kuwait later this month.

Sanders became the command's deputy commander for mobilization in June. He was promoted Nov. 18 during a sunny afternoon ceremony on a Fort Eustis parade field.

"Sandy commands a lot of respect in SDDC, and for good reasons," SDDC commander Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher said during the ceremony. "He's an individual of truly unique talents. The Army recognizes that, and that's why we're promoting him here today."

Sanders has been on active duty since June 2003 when he was mobilized with the 1192nd Terminal Transportation Brigade, New Orleans.

While under Sanders' command, the unit managed the movement of 186 vessel loads of military cargo through 16 U.S. ports in support of the Global War on Terrorism. These operations involved more than 24 million square feet of cargo and were part of the largest movement of U.S. military equipment since World War II.

Sanders said he is ready to take on the responsibilities of his new rank.

"The challenge remains the same," he said. "Soldiers need leaders, and we're here to continue supporting the war fighter and the president of the United States."

Sanders is a graduate of the U.S.



Brig. Gen. Maynard "Sandy" Sanders hugs his mother, LaVerl Sanders, following his promotion. Looking on is the general's wife, Fran Sanders.

Army War College, Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Military Academy.

His decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Ranger Tab and the Parachutist Badge.

In civilian life, the Mobile, Ala., resident owns

a financial services company.

Scheid, the current deputy commander and director of operations, is on a 90-day rotation as the commander of the Central Command Deployment and Distribution Operations Center, Kuwait.

His duties will include managing the flow of Department of Defense surface cargo and supplies in Southwest Asia. 🌐

Brig. Gen. Maynard "Sandy" Sanders receives a ceremonial shell during his promotion ceremony from the officer in charge of the salute battery. Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher, right, promoted Sanders.



SDDC bids farewell to outgoing deputy to the commander

By LaWanda York, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's Senior Executive Service member and Deputy to the Commander retired at a ceremony held in Alexandria, Va., January 27, 2005.

Mr. William Lucas retired after serving 28 years with SDDC and a total of 33 years of service to the U.S. government.

Lucas was the first civilian selected to serve as SDDC's Deputy to the Commander. The position was slotted for a military officer when Maj. Gen. John R. Piatak decided to have it converted to a Senior Executive Service position in 1990. SDDC, previously known as Military Traffic Management Command, works hand in hand with industry and Piatak believed the position needed to have a civilian deputy for continuity, corporate knowledge, and an understanding of the civilian work force.

Lucas began his government tour of duty when he enlisted in the Army in 1967 to 1970. He held positions with the Interstate Commerce Commission in the Inland Traffic Directorate and in the Freight Services Branch. In the span of a few years, Lucas became the branch chief. When the Deputy Division Chief for the Inland Traffic job became vacant, Lucas was selected for the position.

"I have told a lot of folks over the years—I really have been a beneficiary of being in the right place at the right time, so many times throughout my life," Lucas said. "Because, when I look back, the people who held the branch chiefs jobs were people who had been in the position for a year. I just happened to hit it right, when they were retiring"



William Lucas (left) shares a joke with SDDC Commander, Brig. Gen. Charles Fletcher, Jr. at Lucas' retirement dinner held in Alexandria, Va.

(Photos by Diana Dawa)

Lucas said that's probably good news for a lot of the folks in our workforce right now, with the aging of the workforce, that people like him are moving on and getting out of the way, and opening up opportunities. While Lucas was the Deputy Director of Inland Traffic, he was selected to attend the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

"Attending the Industrial College of the Armed Forces was one of the highlights of not only my career, but of my life—it was a wonderful year," Lucas said.

Upon his return from the college he worked briefly in Inland Traffic and then was asked to work for the Army Staff at the Pentagon where he became the Assistant Director for Transportation in the Directorate for Transportation Energy and Troop in 1990. He started in July 1990 just as the Gulf War had begun. Once again

proving timing is everything in a government career.

Three Senior Executive Service positions came open simultaneously towards the end of 1990. Lucas first interviewed with Gen. Richard Larson for a position at the Pentagon. During the interview, Lucas explained that he really wanted the position with MTMC. Piatak selected him for the position of Deputy to the Commander for MTMC in December 1990.

Lucas said one of his most significant accomplishments has been the ability to make people smile and feel good about themselves.

"To help them (the people) understand their importance not only to the command, but to our national military strategy," Lucas said. "SDDC is really quite impressive in what it brings to the table and you can get bogged down in the day-to-day and not step back and

Colleen Lucas is honored during her husband's retirement dinner. Standing with her at left; SDDC Command Sgt. Maj. Tomás Hawkins, at right; Maj. Stephen Ledbetter, aide de camp, commanding general SDDC.



admire what it is you do for the country.”

“Mr. Lucas’ wisdom and genuine regard for people at all levels helps motivate them to aspire and do the best with the tools they have which always strengthened the organization,” said Isaac Smith, traffic management specialist for SDDC.

“I have the utmost respect for Mr. Bill Lucas,” said Virginia King, director of SDDC G1/4 (personnel and logistics). “I am always amazed at the wealth of knowledge he has in transportation. When he speaks, the words flow with such ease, it is as if he was born a transporter. I will personally miss his words of encouragement.”

Accomplishments to Lucas were not his own but rather the command’s accomplishments. He said one that stood out was that the Global Privately Owned Vehicle Contract. American Auto Logistics was initially awarded the contract and it has sustained a customer satisfaction rating of 99 percent for a number of years.

“I still hold that out as being one of the finest examples of a public-private partnership,” Lucas said. “They are committed to the quality of life of our service members.”

Lucas said there were only two things he would have liked to see come to term during his tenure, Families First and having a single headquarters. Families First is a pro-

gram that will change the way a service member’s personal property is moved and is scheduled to begin October 2005. Currently, the command is divided with headquarters in Alexandria and the operations center located at Fort Eustis, Va.

During his tenure Lucas dealt with massive shipments during military operations in the Gulf War, Somalia, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Lucas met his wife, Colleen, while working at SDDC. They have three daughters, Erin, Katie and Maureen Lucas, and a son, Sgt. Bill Lucas, who is currently serving in the U.S. Army’s 25th Infantry Division with Task Force Saber in Afghanistan. 🌐



Lucas shares a moment with wife, Colleen, at his retirement dinner. Lucas retired as SDDC’s deputy to the commander.

SDDC capitalizes on process improvement via the high seas

By Mitch Chandran, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command capitalizes on intelligent computer agents to aid in planning massive cargo deployments and is sending this technology out to sea to further streamline the Department of Defense's distribution process.

The Integrated Computerized Deployment System (ICODES) computer program is a space planning and cargo management tool that stow planners use to safely and efficiently prepare load plans on a variety of vessels.

Until recently, stow planners could not finalize cargo load plans until vessels arrived into port to know what space was actually available.

Having the software shipboard provides captains and appropriate crew the capability of receiving, interpreting, and sending stow plans back to the destination port with the ship's condition and requirements via email prior to arriving. This refined process helps to shorten port time for vessels.

"It's very important for someone to know what the condition of the ship is prior to its arrival that way they can basically begin their load plan using accurate information about what's in the tanks and so on," said Steve Goodman, ICODES project manager for SDDC.

In 1999, SDDC initiated deploying, installing, and training appropriate vessel crewmembers to utilize ICODES shipboard. The USNS Capella was the first ship to receive the program. Currently, 66 vessels are outfitted with ICODES with a target of 300 by 2006. Ships earmarked to receive the program come from the Ready Reserve Fleet, Navy Amphibious Assault Fleet, and



An ICODES screen depicts a load plan for a few decks of the Cape Rise vessel during an earlier deployment out of the Port of Beaumont, Texas, and destined for Kuwait.

(Courtesy U.S. Army photo)

Large Medium Speed Roll-on/Roll-off ships.

"The Office of the Secretary of Defense designated ICODES as the DoD decision-support, multi-conveyance cargo load planning tool," said Goodman. "This tool assists military and civilian personnel with planning, executing and tracking the loading and stowage of military cargos onto surface conveyance."

"12 years ago, ICODES was not even a dream," he said. "However, the command was using a software application known as CODES. It was discovered during Desert Shield and Desert Storm that CODES was not capable of handling everything for efficient stow planning."

"ICODES is agent-based technology," said Boone Pendergrast, ICODES customer support representative for CDM Technologies, Inc. "CODES was not. With CODES, the stow planner would have to check to see if the item would fit based on dimensional data of the cargo versus access points on the ship. But there are other considerations

not in CODES as well such as trim, stress and stability of the ship, hazardous segregation and the placement of priority and sensitive items."

ICODES has access, trim, stow, cargo, and hazard agents built into the program. The program can link and pull data in from other programs. One example is linking to Transportation Coordinators Automated Information Movement System II (TC AIMSII). ICODES can read what's inside containers since TC AIMSII will track the in-transit visibility part of the distribution process for sustainment cargo.

"This also extends the reach for in-transit visibility," said Goodman. "Now, we can track where cargos are exactly by position on the ship and then the captain will now know where those cargos are and that becomes extremely important especially regarding hazardous materials."

Currently SDDC is managing the refinement of ICODES version 5.4.1. This new version will allow for better in-transit visibility and accuracy of a load by allowing the documentation of

Workshop attendees focus ‘Eyes to the Future’

Story and photos by Robyn Mack, Public Affairs Specialist
599th Transportation Group



Aaron LeBlanc (standing) and Jim Heldreth, cargo specialists for the 842nd Transportation Battalion at Port Beaumont, Texas, work on the stow plan for another massive cargo deployment on the Cape Vincent supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom III deployment.

(Photo by Luke Gyax)


stowed items through the use of handheld personnel digital assistants and the ICODES Facility Management Tool.

“I think it is very beneficial for the end user to have these tools,” said Pendergrast. “ICODES allows the user to track movement of cargo from ship through port. With the newer version users will also have a time component and be able to do analysis on how many pieces can be moved within a specified time period.”

“I think ICODES is a very beneficial tool,” said Carol Curtis, chief mate and relief officer for Keystone Shipping Services, Inc. “I like the individualized information per unit and it is an incredibly detailed program that calculates well.”

More than 2,200 users across the four services use ICODES around the world.

“In addition, ICODES is being used by the Navy to validate ship design,” said Goodman. “ICODES plays a major role in enhancing the efficiency and cost effectiveness of those moves.”

SDDC moves more than 92 percent of Department of Defense’s equipment by sea to deploy and sustain ongoing military operations. 



Participants of the 2005 SDDC – Pacific Personal Property and Passenger Workshop included Pacific Theater transportation offices, theater component commands, industry partners, all branches of services, and other federal agencies to include DLA and Customs and Border Protection.

The focus of this year’s Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command’s Personal Property Office-Pacific Training Workshop was “Families First— Eyes to the Future.”

More than 250 transportation professionals gathered at the Ala Moana Hotel in Waikiki Jan. 24 to 27 to discuss programs, such as Families First, as well as learn about the latest initiatives in the personal property and passenger arenas.

The PPO–Pacific holds the training annually as a venue for Pacific Theater transportation offices to learn, discuss and solve issues affecting traffic management, said Mr. Walt Agena, traffic manager for the SDDC–Pacific.

Agena added that although program changes are not affected here, local and lower-level situations could often be resolved and provide an immediate benefit.

Air Force Col. Thomas Keller, Deputy Chief of Staff, Passenger and Personal Property, SDDC, served as the keynote speaker for the workshop and was excited to talk about the Families First program.

“Looking toward the future is good but, as you look,” he told the crowd. “Focus on the servicemembers and their families who are serving you and me, and the way of life we have come to appreciate.”

Keller said the Families First initiative is reengineering household goods management.

Families First is the future for the Department of Defense Personal Property program. The program will be implemented in three phases, with its launch scheduled for October 2005.

See “PPP” pg. 41

Group Commander and Multi-Functional Team observes Valdez Ammunition Mission

By Lt. Col. Mike Balser, Commander
833rd Transportation Battalion

Twice yearly, the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command helps rotate ammunition into and out of Alaska for U.S. forces stationed there. The rationale is simple; ammunition must move while the weather is good, or the winter will make transportation networks impassible.

In spring and fall, the 833rd Transportation Battalion ships ammunition from Naval Magazine Indian Island, Washington State, to Valdez in south-central Alaska; pushes new ammunition into the Alaska region; and retrogrades old ammunition from Valdez back to NMII. Valdez is the northernmost year-round ice free port in America, and this year we had a special guest to observe operations, Col. Ace Chen, commander of the 597th Transportation Group.

Chen visited the Port of Valdez in November as part of a holistic examination of distribution operation in Alaska. He took into the port a Joint team; with assistance of the Alaskan Command's logistics shop (J4), to examine several supply and distribution centers. Though closed to tour groups after 9/11, he was invited to visit the Alyeska Pipeline Terminal, which is where the fabled Alaskan oil pipeline ends.

It runs 800 miles from the North Slope of Alaska to Valdez, supplying nearly 20 percent of the US domestic crude oil and 80 percent of the crude oil on the West Coast. The volume of oil flowing through the pipeline is one million barrels per day, and the terminal is an excellent example of the distribution process of Class III (bulk).

Chen met with the people of the Port of Valdez as well as the local



View of Prince William Sound from Valdez Coast Guard headquarters, November 2004.

(Photo courtesy of the 833rd Transportation Battalion)

Coast Guard units. After learning about operations at the port and the USCG mission in Valdez, Chen received a tour of the USCG's Vessel Traffic Center - similar to an air traffic control center, it tracks movement of vessels in their area of responsibility.

As an ammunition port commander himself, he took great interest in the reception and movement of the ammunition supporting Alaska. Valdez's 700-foot floating dock allows smooth unloading operations; given the tremendous tides (30' average) a ship performing roll-on/roll-off operations may only have its ramp on the pier for about three hours every tidal period. A floating dock, in an

enclosed harbor, helps mitigate some of those Alaskan-specific operational challenges.

Chen left there much surprised at the workload of the joint, multifunctional Alaskan team, and much impressed with the beauty of Alaska. He awarded a Group coin to the sole SDDC employee stationed in Alaska, Bob Meno, in gratitude for the continuity Meno provides. After the visit it was off to the airport to start the long series of flights back to the East Coast, flights that lasted longer than his total time on the ground.

"Make no mistake," said Chen. "This is a challenging environment for distribution operations ... I'm glad to have learned so much from the visit." 🌐

Projected Alaskan military growth spurs fact finding mission

By Capt. Alex Padgett, 833rd Transportation Battalion Operations
Photos by Lt. Col. Mike Balser, Commander
833rd Transportation Battalion



Just one Fort Richardson “transportability” asset: a snowblower.

expansion in all Services of the U.S. forces in Alaska in the coming 6-24 months, Chen wants to know the right mix of distribution skills and personnel to meet the new requirements.

“The first thing is to make our leadership fully aware of the growth potential in Alaska,” Chen said, “so we’re empowered to meet new requirements with the right force mix.” After having met with transportation leaders in the area, including the former Alaskan Governor Bill

Sheffield, and now the serving Director, Port of Anchorage, Chen has a better idea what those new requirements are.

From the United States Army Alaska G4, and the Fort Richardson Director of Logistics and Installation Transportation Officer, Chen received a full briefing on the deployment and distribution challenges of our largest state. Over 80 percent of all commodities purchased by Alaskans flow through the seaport of Anchorage, spurring a competition for limited staging areas.

“Our forces here are expanding rapidly, both as part of our Army’s force restructuring and the return of forces from overseas. As these forces realign themselves to the Alaskan theater, we look forward to more permanent manning solutions for our deployments and movement operations,” said Installation Transportation Officer, Dave Buirge.

While visiting the Director of Logistics, J4 Alaskan Command on Elmendorf Air Force Base, Chen was offered planning assistance to help identify the new customer base. Based on inputs received from regional experts, Chen is busy crafting a plan of action. Some recommendations for the future may include increasing manning the SDDC Anchorage office, and maximizing synergy in surface movement planning and execution by co-locating Military Sealift Command elements with SDDC assets.

SDDC’s 833rd Transportation Battalion services Alaska with port operations support. Their battalion commander is Lt. Col. Mike Balser, who said “Our battalion from Seattle operates out of at least four ports in Alaska...this vast area demands more effective ways to meet our customers’ needs, and the 597th TTG is addressing that need. Meantime, this is an inspiring, and beautiful, place to operate. We consider ourselves fortunate.”

Stryker training on Fort Richardson.



In zero degree temperatures, before the sun comes out, a dockworker puts on his cold weather “mustang suit” and trudges out to the work site. It’s a traditional routine in the Alaskan winter, but this is no ordinary worker; Col. Ace Chen has just suited up for a seaport mission in Alaska, and he intends to learn all he can about operating in this challenging environment.

Chen, commander of the 597th Transportation Terminal Group, headquartered at the Military Ocean Terminal, Sunny Point in Southport, North Carolina, has come to Alaska as part of a Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command fact finding study. In order to provide responsive customer service, Chen knew SDDC leaders had to examine the recent troop increase as well as projected growth of forces in Alaska. Given the pending

Student Educational Employment Program pay\$-off for SDDC

By Mitch Chandran, Public Affairs Specialist
SDDC Headquarters

They're young, they're excited about working and they're making a positive difference as students employed by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command through the Student Educational Employment Program.

Temporary and part-time student employees with SDDC offer additional skills and talents to the many missions the command performs with the possibility of being converted to a full-time Federal employee after graduation.

The program has two components. One component is the Student Temporary Employment allowing a Federal agency to hire students temporarily. One example is a high school student performing office administrative duty during summer.

The other component is the Student Career Experience offering part-time positions throughout the year to students having a direct relationship between their field of study and their position with SDDC. An example is a college student majoring in law and working part time in the Staff Judge Advocate office.

Cathy Cherney, lead human resource specialist with SDDC, started her Federal career under the Student Programs about 30 years ago. She also manages the Student Educational Employment Program for the command.

"The Student Career Experience component is a great start for a college student who is also ready to enter the workforce," said Cherney.

She said there is also an appointing authority to convert part-time students in this component to full-time employees into an authorized position



(Standing) Jackie Woodson, chief of Transportation Information Management and Terminal Services Division, and Deonna Murrell, contract specialist, verify all the elements in a government contract are correct.

(Photo by Alex Shalak)

without competition when they graduate.

"As one example, we had a student pursuing an undergraduate degree in business working in our acquisition office," said Cherney. "When she graduated she became a full-time Federal employee with us."

The student Cherney cites is Deonna Murrell now a contract spe-

cialist for the Transportation Information Management and Terminal Services Division in the SDDC Contracting Center.

Murrell started as a temporary employee with SDDC while in high school about five years ago. When she attended college her employment status converted to part time under the Student Career Experience component

until she graduated. She started her full-time Federal career in June after receiving her bachelor of business administration degree.

“Now, I’m literally working on million dollar contracts on behalf of SDDC,” said Murrell. “I feel good because I have more responsibility now than before as a temporary or part-time employee.”

“I consider Deonna an asset,” said Jackie Woodson, chief of Transportation Information Management and Terminal Services Division in the SDDC Contracting Center. “As a student, she started out doing simple things in the office. If we had any special projects, we could give them to her and she would get them done when we needed them.”

Murrell’s current goals are to complete all three levels of certification required by her job series, work to acquire a master’s degree in contract management and advance as a Federal employee in her field.

Cherney cites several advantages associated with this program.

“When you come out of school you go through that whole process of trying to find a job,” said Cherney. “Under the Student Career Experience Program, a job is already lined up. You have all the benefits of being a Federal employee. We have comparable pay, excellent benefits and a good retirement.”

Cherney recommends if a student is interested in working as a Federal employee for SDDC, or any other Federal agency, to first touch base with their school’s guidance counselor. Federal agencies work with both the counselor and students to see if the program is right for the student and the organization

She also advises current students in the program to find someone in or near their office who they and others think are successful and benchmark from this person. Take time to have a professional appearance, act professionally and just as importantly be committed to the program. 📍

Air Force Col. Thomas Keller, Deputy Chief of Staff, Passenger and Personal Property, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, makes his keynote address at the 2005 SDDC – Pacific Personal Property and Passenger Workshop. This year’s theme was based on the Department of Defense Personal Property Initiative “Families First.”



Keller noted in his opening remarks that Families First will take the way personal property is currently handled and offer new aspects that are geared toward the quality of life for the servicemember.

“Families First is just one item people are learning about here. Attendees are also receiving the latest information on current programs, and gaining more information on pending program changes,” Agena said.

The event also provided an outlet for many different organizations to come together and share ideas.

All branches of services are represented and other federal agencies, including the Defense Logistics Agency, Customs and Border Protection, and the Department of State attend and facilitate the workshop.

According to Agena, having so many different organizations taking part in the workshop lends to many valuable outcomes.

“One of the greatest aspects of conducting the workshop is the opportunity to gather transporters and receive the latest program and future program information from subject matter experts,” he said. “We are all able to

participate in discussions to learn, discover differences in procedures, offer solutions, and what the correct method should be. Additionally, people are able to interact, network, reacquaint, make new contacts—huge benefits that are only available in this type of setting.”

Some other topics covered during this year’s workshop were:

- Per Diem
- Privately Owned Vehicles
- Military Shipping Labels
- Defense Travel System

For a full list of topics, or to view the presentations, visit <http://www.sddc.army.mil>.

Overall, attendees remarked in surveys taken during the week that they were pleased with the presentations and format of the workshop.

“The synergy created in the learning and sharing provides the greatest benefit to the attendee,” said Agena. “The desired outcome of any workshop is that the attendee is better equipped to manage his or her traffic management responsibilities, not only at their individual offices, but that the knowledge gained is will be passed on to their responsible staff.” 📍

599th captain garners SDDC Junior Officer of the Year award

By Robyn Mack, Public Affairs Specialist
599th Transportation Group

Captain Julia Bell is not only the best captain in the 599th Transportation Group, she is the top junior officer in the 595th Transportation Group (Provisional),” according to Col. Thomas A. Harvey, 599th Transportation Group and 595th Transportation Group (Provisional) commander.

And, he’s not the only person that thinks so.

The Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command recently selected Capt. Julia Bell as the 2004 SDDC Major General Henry R. Del Mar Junior Officer of the Year.

The award recognizes the outstanding leadership and personal performance of junior officer’s in SDDC.

“It’s quite an honor to receive the award,” she said. “And, my gratitude and thanks is especially directed toward my chain of command—their hard work and dedication toward the submission process.”

Bell was assigned to the 599th Transportation Group following a tour as the commander, D Company, 725th Main Support Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and, has recently returned from an 8-month deployment in Southwest Asia.

“She hit the ground running from the moment she arrived,” said Lt. Col. Reggie Hall, assistant chief of staff, 599th Operations. “She was a vital member to several exercises, including the Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI) in Korea where she stood up the first ever Deployment and Distribution Operations Center for U.S. Forces Korea.”

Bell is considered an initiative-driven member of the team by the leadership here.

“She has laid the ground work for several improvements in the way we do business,” said Harvey. “She helped develop ‘Your Guide to Deployment’ pamphlet which is the foundation for all division unit movement officers; and now, is standard operating procedure for the 25th ID.”

The proficiency the 9-year Army veteran brings to the table was also vital to developing integrated active-duty and Reserve deployment team experts. As a result of her training programs, there was a reduction of frustrated equipment, allowing deploying units to process through the alert holding area in four hours versus the usual 12.

But, she didn’t finish the job there. The captain led the first end-to-end unit deployment by the 599th of more than 3,000 pieces of equipment with 100 percent in-transit visibility from the unit motor pool to the tactical assembly area. Leading the way through the efficient use of Radio Frequency Identification tag technology and other automated systems.

Her experiences deploying units would later come in handy, when the tri-athlete volunteered to deploy to SWA in June in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

“I served as the 595th’s battle captain in the brigade-level tactical operations center at the sea point of disembarkation in Kuwait,” she said. “It was a tremendous amount of responsibility, but necessary to ensure the capabilities of our warfighters.”

As the battle captain, Bell’s duties included maintaining a common operational picture for U.S. and Coalition vessels in the Central Command area of responsibility, in addition to overseeing



Capt. Julia Bell, 595th Transportation Group (Provisional) Battle Captain, displays a medal earned in the Army 10-Kilometer Run at Fort Buering, Kuwait. Bell placed third in her age class.

(Photo by Cmdr. Randall Ramian)

strategic and intra-theater sealift.

“Her dedication to the job truly enhanced my ability to effectively command and control SDDC’s most complex operational support unit,” Harvey said of her service for the 595th.

“Captain Bell’s excellent leadership is the means for SDDC’s highly successful deployment and distribution operations involving more than 75,000 pieces of warfighter equipment.”

Bell now goes on to compete as the SDDC and the Transportation Corps Regimental nominee for the General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award. 📍

(Editors note: After this article was written it was announced that Capt. Julia Bell won the honor of becoming a General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award recipient.)



One of the most popular ceremonies to celebrate the New Year is the traditional Japanese practice of mochitsuki (mochi pounding). In Japan, sweet rice paste called mochi is made in recognition of special occasions throughout the year and is always eaten at the New Year.

Maj. Richard Yada (shown left), 835th Transportation Battalion acting commander, and Staff Sgt. (P) Paul Guerrero, 835th terminal management, take part in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Forces Rice Pounding Ceremony Dec. 21.

Pounding steamed glutinous rice in a large wooden mortar, called the usu, with a wooden mallet called the kine, makes Mochi - which is similar to a rice cake.

(Photo courtesy of the 835th Transportation Battalion)

Dear Editor:

I work for the USDA Forest Service in Knoxville Tennessee. Recently a question arose on rental car rates. We have no documentation on the rates set so I searched the internet for the information I needed. I didn't find the information I was looking for but I did find an inquiry form so I submitted my question.

Very shortly, Tina Smith, SDDC HQ, sent me a message with assistance on finding the information I needed.

Shortly after that, Christine Braswell, SDDC HQ, called me to help me with my problem. Not only did she provide the information I needed but pulled the contract folder for the vendor in order to provide everything I needed.

I am so grateful to your staff for the outstanding customer service! As a fellow government employee, I

know that customer service is our main priority but to have it carried out in such a quick, professional, and friendly manner was unexpected. Especially since I am with another agency in another part of the country!

Please pass along my appreciation to your outstanding staff for their help. And thanks to all of you in the military who serve our country everywhere in the world. We support you!

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